Rural India development: Amitabh Kant calls for fair prices, rights, and stronger local institutions

Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said rural India should be treated as a source of production and innovation, not welfare alone. Speaking at the Rohini Nayyar Prize ceremony, he called for fair prices, reliable services, secure rights, finance, and connectivity. He highlighted technology, market access, food processing, farmer-producer organisations, and women-led enterprises.

By **Vasant Shah**

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Former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant urged a rural development approach that treats villages as places of production and new ideas. Kant said rural people should be valued as citizens and workers. Kant argued that progress depends on fair prices and strong public systems. Kant was speaking at the fifth Rohini Nayyar Prize ceremony on Saturday.

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Kant outlined what rural families require to improve their lives and incomes.

Kant said, "We can build a development mo
seen as producers, innovators, and citizens
fair prices, functioning services, secure righ
and respect.\" Kant linked these needs to d

Rural development model for rural India

Kant said rural India should become a hub for economic work, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Kant cautioned against treating villages mainly as welfare delivery points. Kant said higher farm productivity was necessary for inclusive growth. Kant also backed rural industries, stronger womens self-help groups, and wider skill training for young people.

Kant also highlighted tools that can raise rural incomes and job options. Kant pointed to technology use and better market access as key supports. Kant said food processing can help farmers earn more value. Kant also stressed the role of farmer-producer organisations in improving livelihoods and bargaining power.

Grassroots institutions and rural dev

Calling for stronger local systems, Kant said policies should reduce gaps across districts. Kant said decision-making must involve local communities more directly. Kant noted that women were central to rural economic change. Kant said women-led enterprises and collective work can support steady and lasting improvements.

Kant also spoke about Dr Rohini Nayyar's focus on rural lives and outcomes. Kant said, \"Rohini Nayyar was not simply an economist or administrator, but a person who believed that the measure of Indias progress could be found in the lives of its rural citizens.\" Kant linked this view to the purpose of the prize.

Rohini Nayyar Prize and rural development model

Prashant Chaudhary, a technology educator from Dehradun, received the fifth Rohini Nayyar Prize on Saturday. Chaudhary became the first person from his village near Meerut to join an IIT in 2010. Chaudhary founded the CodeYogi Foundation. The organisation works to equip Indias unreached youth with practical AI and technology skills.

The prize began in 2022 in memory of former economist and administrator Dr Rohini Nayyar. It includes Rs 10 lakh in cash, a citation, and a trophy. Rohini Nayyar's family set up the Nayyar Foundation for Social and Economic Purpose. The foundation awards the prize each year to support social and economic development in India.

The earlier winners were Sethrichem Sangtam from Nagaland in 2022 and Dinanath Rajput from Chhattisgarh in 2023. The 2024 winner was Anil Pradhan from Odisha. The 2025 award went to Vidhya Parshuramkar from Pune. The foundation's directors include Deepak Nayyar, Dhiraj Nayyar, and Gaurav Nayyar.

With inputs from PTI